

Copy of my letter to the DOJ on LPFM and civil rights ---

NOTE: Please forward this Message to Acting Assistant Attorney General Jocelyn Samuels of the Civil Rights Division.

Dear AAAG Samuels,

This message is in support of the request for Department of Justice action from attorney Donald J. Schellhardt of the LET THE CITIES IN! organization. Mr. Schellhardt makes the point that the FCC has blocked inner-city minority communities from establishing their own low power FM (LPFM) community radio broadcast stations. The FCC has accomplished this by setting the power levels of these stations at 100 Watts.

This fairly high power level greatly limits the number of LPFM radio stations that can be installed in a large city. Indeed, New York City does not have any available room for such a local station. This situation can be corrected if the FCC would allow lower power broadcast stations to be operated. For example, the big cities could accommodate several 10-Watt stations. These low power stations have been operated before as FCC licensed Class D broadcast stations owned by universities.

The effect of the current situation is that the FCC is discriminating against minority communities living in America's inner cities. I am one of the original petitioners to the FCC for the establishment of the LPFM radio broadcasting service. In our original proposal, we suggested the use of one-Watt radio broadcast stations that would cover individual neighborhoods. Much of our focus in this proposal was on minority neighborhoods and their needs for local communications and community building. Refer to FCC docket 99-25, In the Matter of Creation of a Low Power Radio Service.

Please act on attorney Schellhardt's request and investigate the civil rights impact of the FCC's action blocking LPFM stations in the inner cities.

Nickolaus E. Leggett

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Cc: Donald J. Schellhart, esq.